Pre-Visit Preparations:

Name Tags - Who Am I?

Objective: Students will explore the concept of ecosystem and the members of an ecosystem.

They will research a Wind Cave National Park ecosystem member and identify ways that, in a functioning ecosystem, life forms and environmental factors

interact to maintain a dynamic equilibrium

Procedure: Students will make a nametag. They should select a Wind Cave National Park

ecosystem member from the list below to illustrate their nametag. In addition to making the nametag, the students should research the plant, animal, or element

they selected.

Suggested Name Tag List:

Bison Woodpecker Fire Lichen

Mule Deer Prairie Rattlesnake
Prairie Dog Buffalo Grass
Badger Bumble Bee
Coyote Grasshoppers

Bull Snake Little Blue Stem Grass

Water Cave Boxwork
Ponderosa Pine Pasqueflower
Elk Cottontail Rabbit

Moth Bluebird
Butterfly Eagle
Meadowlark Bones

Cave Blue Grama Grass

Great Horned Owl Limestone
Bat Juniper Tree
Soil Wind Cave Visitor

Black-footed Ferret Scat

Chokecherry Decayed Plants



Students should arrive knowing that there are three main ecosystems at Wind Cave National Park: the prairie, the forest, and the cave. Have the students discuss what ecosystem(s) their selection is a member of. Have them discuss why they are found at Wind Cave. How do they fit in or interact with the other members of the ecosystem? Name another member of the ecosystem and ask the student his/her relationship to the previous person. Ask the students how they are connected to each other as a whole ecosystem. Suggest additional, outside impacts to the ecosystem and have the group discuss how would it affect each member of the ecosystem. How would fire affect the whole ecosystem? What about: building a parking lot, expanding farm fields, adding more land to the park?